

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 317  
By: Miller  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

There were no public upper-level higher education opportunities within 100 miles of Bell County until the 75th Texas Legislature created the state's first University System Center by enacting S.B. 572 in 1997. By the spring of 2007 term, Tarleton State University System Center-Central Texas enrolled over 1,900 students--an increase of 56 percent since Tarleton-CT opened its doors in the fall of 1999. In the seven years it has been open, Tarleton-CT has graduated 3,188 students.

Tarleton-CT, located in Killeen, was the first university system center created by the state under the "Supply/Demand Pathway" model. This model is designed to provide higher education opportunities in fast-growing geographical areas where opportunities for post secondary education are not readily available. The Texas Education Code requires that Tarleton-CT enroll 1,000 full-time students in order to be redesignated as the stand-alone Texas A&M University-Central Texas (TAMU-CT).

While the relationship between Tarleton State University and Tarleton-CT has been beneficial to both institutions, the future Texas A&M University-Central Texas will be able to better supply the unique educational demands of Central Texas, specifically Fort Hood and the medical/biotechnology cluster in Temple.

As University System Centers on the "pathway" are solely dependent on the local communities to provide instructional facilities, House Bill 317 aligns the enrollment threshold requirements for TRBs consistent with those in the Education Code for stand-alone status, and authorizes the Texas A&M University System to issue \$25 million in Tuition Revenue Bonds for infrastructure and educational facilities.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1: Amends Section 55.1751 (d) of the Education Code. Requires that the Texas A&M University System may not issue bonds for facilities at Texas A&M University--Central Texas until the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board certifies that the institution has reached an enrollment equivalent of 1,000 full-time students for one semester. Provides expiration date.

SECTION 2: Effective date.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

